

AN OBSERVER'S GUIDE *to* WASHINGTON STATE ELECTIONS



Washington
Secretary of State
SAM REED

Introduction

We, in the state of Washington, enjoy a unique tradition of promoting citizen involvement in our political system. The role of observers is grounded in our heritage of encouraging citizens to participate in our political process. Their objective observation of the procedures helps ensure the integrity of our elections.

This pamphlet is intended to explain the process of issuing, processing, and counting ballots by Election Divisions throughout the state. Information related to a specific county's procedures may be obtained from the County Auditor's office or Elections Department. This pamphlet is not intended to be a substitute for the statutes governing this process, but rather should be read in conjunction with them.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your County Auditor or Elections Department, or the Secretary of State's Elections Division. We will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sam Reed". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sam Reed
Secretary of State

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County Contact Information

Phone numbers and office
locations for all 39 counties
are located on the Secretary of
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Elections Calendar.

Specific election dates are located at: http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/calendar_full.aspx.

Election Information

Election Dates

You can find more detailed information about specific dates related to elections at the online elections calendar at www.vote.wa.gov.

Primary

The Primary is held on the third Tuesday of August. The purpose of a primary is to narrow the number of candidates for each office down to two. The Top 2 Primary allows voters to choose among all candidates running for each office. Voters do not have to declare a party affiliation to vote.

The two candidates receiving the most votes in the Primary will qualify for the General Election. Candidates must also receive at least 1% of the votes cast for the race to advance to the General Election. Other rules apply to judicial races, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Precinct Committee Officers.

Presidential Primary

In addition, a presidential primary may be held during a presidential election year on the fourth Tuesday in May or possibly an alternate date proposed by the Office of the Secretary of State. Voters have the opportunity to demonstrate to the political party chairs which candidate they would like to see their party endorse for the presidential election.

General Election

The General Election is held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Candidates receiving the most votes in the General Election are elected to office.

Special Elections

State law allows for additional dates at which special elections may be held:

- The first Tuesday after the first Monday in February
- The second Tuesday in March
- The fourth Tuesday in April
- The third Tuesday in May

In addition, the Legislature may set additional special election dates by statute.

Major Political Party.

A political party is designated as a major party if one of its nominees received more than 5 percent of the total votes cast for President, United States Senator, or a statewide office in a general election in an even numbered year.

Election Observer.

An official election observer is appointed by one of the major political parties. An official observer may not be an election worker hired to process ballots and may not serve as a poll watcher at the same time.

Logic and Accuracy.

An official test to verify that the ballot counter and programming correctly counts each style of ballot and produces cumulative totals.

Political Party Observers

Anyone has the right to observe any part of the election process. Observers may watch all aspects of the election including opening of absentee ballots, counting ballots, and the securing of ballots.

Major political parties have a responsibility to provide observers to monitor the election process. Prior to an election, County Auditors or County Election Departments contact the major political parties to inform them of how many observers are needed.

Common questions about being a Political Party Observer. More specific information is found in other chapters of this manual.

What should I do if I am appointed as a Political Party Observer?

You should contact your County Auditor or Elections Department to be put on the list of official observers. The County Auditor or Elections Department will provide you with required training specific to the county's processes and equipment. The County Auditor or Elections Department will tell you when and where you may observe each procedure.

Where can I be trained to be a Political Party Observer?

The County Auditor or Elections Department provides training that you are required to attend. No one may serve as an observer that has not first received training. The Office of the Secretary of State may also conduct training, but you are not required to attend.

Are Political Party Observers used only in the Primary and General Election?

No. All elections need to have observers before, during, and after Election Day.

What election processes may I observe?

You are encouraged to observe:

- Printing of ballots
- Ballot assembly
- Logic and accuracy tests prior to Election Day, including the testing of any precinct ballot counters
- Signature comparison, opening and inspection of mail ballots

- Election Night procedures
- Ballot duplication or resolution
- Counting of ballots
- Storing and securing the ballots
- Processing of provisional ballots
- Canvassing board meetings
- Reconciliation of ballots and ballot totals
- Certification of the election
- Any other times when ballots are handled by the County Auditor's Office

Every county may vary in procedures following the close of the polls. Depending on whether a county votes completely by mail or has polling places, the ballots may be counted at a counting center or counted at a poll site.

What will I see in a county that votes entirely by mail?

Counties conducting their elections by mail will also have ballot drop off locations. "Drop off" ballots may be collected from the drop off locations several times during the 20 days previous to Election Day and multiple times on Election Day. Ballots, regardless of the method of delivery, may be processed on Election Day. Ballots may be opened and prepared for counting before Election Day, but no votes are counted prior to 7:00 a.m. on Election Day. The results of the vote tally may only be issued after 8:00 p.m.

Political Party Observers should watch the delivery, opening, processing, counting, and storing of ballots.

What should I observe in a county with polls?

When the polls close, there are a variety of procedures to observe depending upon whether ballots are counted at the poll site. In such cases, the ballot counters at the poll site will print out the results for each precinct. The results are also saved electronically on a disc or cartridge. The results may or may not be sent over the telephone lines to the counting center. The printed results, the disc or cartridge, and other supplies are delivered to the counting center. If the results were not sent over the telephone, the results will be loaded onto a computer using the disc or cartridge. Absentee ballots may also be processed throughout the day.

One race may be counted by hand in up to three precincts to check against the printed results. The major political parties must agree to the precincts and race, and notify the County Auditor or Elections Department within 30 minutes of the closing of the polls.

Observers are encouraged to watch the packaging of all materials used at the polls, the delivery of the materials to the counting center, the loading of the results onto the computer, and the processing, counting, storing, and securing of absentee ballots and poll site elections results.

Ballot Counter.

A machine that tabulates votes in a readable format. Also known as a vote tallying system or ballot tabulator.

County Canvassing Board.

Consisting of the County Auditor (in King County it is the Elections Division Director), County Prosecuting Attorney, and the chairman of the County Commissioners or County Council.

**What should I observe at a counting center?**

When the polls close, the precinct election officers bring the ballots, poll books, and supplies in to the counting center. The ballots are checked in, inspected, duplicated when necessary, and then counted. Absentee ballots may also be processed throughout the day.

For counties conducting all mail elections, observers may request a hand count verification of up to six ballot batches in accordance with the County Canvassing Board guidelines.

Political Party Observers are encouraged to observe the delivery, opening, inspection, processing, duplication, counting, storing, and securing of the poll site and absentee ballots.

How close can I be to the ballots?

You cannot touch or interfere with processing the ballots. You may be as close as space allows without interfering with the process.

Are observers needed after Election Day?

There are many activities to observe after Election Day. Political Party Observers are encouraged to watch the processing, counting, and reconciliation of absentee and provisional ballots, attend meetings of the County Canvassing Board, observe the certification of the election, and any other activities involving ballots.

The General Election must be certified 21 days after Election Day. The Primary and all other elections are certified 15 days after Election Day.

What about recounts?

If a race needs to be recounted, Political Party Observers are requested by the County Auditor to watch the entire process.

What if I have questions or concerns?

Talk with your County Auditor (in King County speak to the Elections Division Director) or the person assigned to answer your questions.

Secure Storage.

Secure storage employs the use of numbered seals and logs or any other security measures which will detect inappropriate access to secured materials.

Absentee and Mail Ballots

Mailing the Ballots

Thirty-seven of Washington's 39 counties vote entirely by mail. Through the 2008 General Election, Pierce and King Counties are the only counties which still vote at poll sites. Absentee and mail ballots are available at the County Auditor's office or the Elections Department at least 20 days before an election. Ballots must be mailed to voters at least 18 days before an election.

Securing the Ballots

All voted absentee and mail ballots are kept in secure storage when not being directly processed. Secure storage includes the use of numbered seals and seal logs or other methods that enable detection of any inappropriate access to the secured materials.

Ballot Processing

The Outer Envelope

County Auditors may begin opening voted absentee and mail ballots as soon as they are received. The County Canvassing Board or its designee, usually a staff member of the County Auditor's office or Elections Department, checks the voter's signature and postmark on the outer envelope. With the exception of overseas and service voters, the envelope must either be postmarked no later than the day of the election or deposited in the County Auditor's Office, a polling location, or a designated deposit site not later than 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. For out-of-state, overseas, and service voters the date of signature on the oath on the outer envelope is considered the date of mailing.

If the signature on the envelope matches the signature on the voter's registration and has a valid postmark, the ballot moves on to the next step. If the signature on the envelope is missing or does not match the signature on the registration file, the voter is notified.

The Security Envelope

After signatures are verified, ballots are removed from envelopes in two distinct steps. First, outer envelopes are opened and all inner security envelopes are removed and placed in a tray or batch. All empty outer envelopes are then secured away from the work area prior to the next step. Second, security envelopes are opened and all ballots are removed. This two-step process prevents the identity of a

Ballot Inspection.

Each ballot must be inspected for mistakes or damage that would prevent the votes to be counted correctly.

Ballot Resolution.

In a county using a digital scan system, resolving ballots is the equivalent of duplicating ballots. Resolving a digitally scanned copy of a ballot is done to permit a vote to be counted as the voter intended.

voter being connected to a ballot. Election staff will verify that no ballots remain in the envelopes by looking through the small viewing holes punched through both the outer and security envelopes.

Inspecting Ballots

Absentee and mail ballots must be inspected prior to counting. The inspection process consists of a thorough examination of each ballot and each response position. Election workers look for physically damaged ballots, ballots that are unreadable and might not be correctly counted by the machine, marks that are different from those specified in the voting instructions, stray marks, tears or creases in the ballot, and write-in votes. Such ballots are either duplicated or referred to the County Canvassing Board for determination.

Ballot Duplication

Ballots which are damaged or not readable by the tabulator may be duplicated or resolved when the intent of the voter's marks on a ballot is clear. A voter's intent is determined by guidelines provided by the Secretary of State in the "Statewide Standards of What is a Vote." The guide is available at <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections>.

Ballots are only duplicated by teams of two employees from the County Auditor's office or the Elections Department. A unique control number is assigned to each duplicated ballot. This number is recorded on both the original and duplicate ballots. A log is kept recording the unique control number, the initials of the two people who conducted the duplication, and the total number of ballots duplicated. The original ballots and the duplicate ballots are kept in secure storage.

Ballot Tabulation

Absentee and mail ballots may be processed through a ballot tabulator beginning 7:00 a.m. on Election Day. The results of the tally of votes shall not be produced until after 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

After Election Day, counties process and canvass ballots every three days when in possession of more than 500 ballots and every single day, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, when the population of the county exceeds 75,000 people.

The Polling Place

Pierce and King Counties are the only counties that will open neighborhood polling places on Election Day. Polling places open at 7:00 a.m. and close at precisely 8:00 p.m. Any voters already in the polling place at 8:00 p.m. may vote. Closing procedures are open to the public and observers.

Precinct Election Officers.

The people who help administer elections at each poll site. Also known as “poll workers” or “board workers”.

The precinct election officers consist of inspectors, judges and clerks. For each precinct in the polling place, there is one inspector and one judge from the political party that received the most votes in that county for President during the last presidential election. A second judge should be from the party that received the next highest number of votes. The Auditor may assign a clerk if he or she believes it is necessary. The County Auditor or Elections Department appoints the precinct election officers from a list provided by the major political parties. If the political parties do not provide complete lists of precinct election officers, the County Auditor or Elections Department may appoint others to fill the positions.

The precinct election officers sign an oath prior to undertaking their duties.

The precinct election officers are in charge of the polling place and they have knowledge of what can and cannot take place in the polling place. The following acts are not allowed:

- Campaigning
- Collecting petition signatures
- Impeding the voting process

Provisional Ballots.

A type of ballot issued when the voter's name is not on the voter list, was sent an absentee or mail ballot, did not have identification at the poll site, or any other reason when a voter cannot vote a regular ballot.

The precinct election officers are responsible for issuing the correct ballots to voters, replacing spoiled ballots, issuing provisional ballots and making sure that the provisional ballots are not deposited in the ballot box. Provisional ballots are ballots given to voters who cannot vote a regular ballot. For example, voters whose names are not in the poll book, who have requested an absentee ballot, or who do not have identification.

State law requires any person voting at the polls to provide identification to the poll worker before signing the poll book. If a voter does not have identification, the voter must vote a provisional ballot.

An observer may look at the poll book or at the inspector's copy as long as voters are not waiting to vote and it does not interrupt the voting process.

Counting Center.

The location in a county where ballots are processed and counted. In the case of counties that have ballot counters at the poll site, it is where the results from the poll site and absentee votes are combined into one set of election results.

After the polling place closes, the precinct election officers must account for voted ballots. The precinct election officers must unseal and open the ballot box to count the ballots. The signatures are also counted in the poll book. The poll workers then compare the number of ballots in the ballot box with the number of signatures in the poll book. In counties where ballots are counted at the polling place, the precinct election officers also print out the results of the poll site ballot counter, and compare those results with the number of signatures in the poll book. This information is then written on a ballot accountability form. The precinct election officers must seal all ballots and transport them to the counting center.



The Counting Center and Post-Election Activities

Ballots Counted at the County Auditor's Office or Counting Center

In poll site counties, ballots are delivered from the poll site to the counting center by two people, one representative from the Democratic and Republican Party. They are received by a board consisting of two election workers who keep a log of the time each precinct's ballots are received. They compare the seal number on the ballot box with the seal number recorded on the transport log on the ballot box to ensure that the ballots have not been tampered with.

Poll site and mail ballots are inspected by election workers. In counties using an optical scan counting system, the inspectors are looking for any ballot that may not be read correctly by the vote counting system. This includes stray or incomplete marks, damage to the ballot, and whether the correct marking ink was used. Any ballots that have votes that the counting system cannot read as the voter intended must be duplicated.

The process of duplicating ballots is making a true copy of valid votes from ballots that may not be properly counted by the vote counting system to blank ballots of the same type and style. Voter intent is determined by guidelines provided by the Secretary of State in the "Statewide Standards of What is a Vote." The guide is available at <http://www.secstate.wa.gov/elections>.

The law requires that two people work together when duplicating ballots. Both the old and the new ballot must be assigned a number so that the ballots can be matched together. They must keep a log that includes the number assigned, the initials of the two people duplicating ballots, and the total number of ballots duplicated. Counties may duplicate ballots on election night or set them aside to duplicate later. Digital scan counting systems, such as the Hart System, may resolve ballots electronically. In a county using a digital scan system, resolving ballots is the equivalent of duplicating ballots.

All the ballots that can be read correctly by the counting system are tabulated. After they've been tabulated, they are put in secure storage. The ballots cannot be accessed again unless there is a problem that needs to be resolved before the election is certified, the ballots are to be recounted, or is ordered to reopen the container by a court order.

Secure Storage.

Secure storage employs the use of numbered seals and logs or any other security measures which will detect inappropriate access to secured materials.

Tabulate.

To total votes in a readable format.

In counties where all the voting is by mail, or when the county is processing absentee ballots, the county may begin final processing of ballots on Election Day at 7:00 a.m. They follow the same procedures: tabulating ballots and placing them in secure storage. The county must wait until 8:00 p.m. to tabulate and print the unofficial results.

In counties with poll sites, as soon as possible after Election Day, election staff will compare the number of ballots tabulated in each precinct to the number of signatures in the poll book. These two numbers should match. If they do not, they must investigate and resolve the discrepancy if at all possible. They must document all of their efforts and the results of the investigation and present that documentation to the County Canvassing Board.

They must also give credit to all voters who cast a vote and compare that number with the number of ballots tabulated to ensure that the number is the same. The same procedures apply with regard to investigating and reporting the results of the investigation.

After Election Day, the election staff continues to process mail ballots, checking signatures, postmarks, opening, inspecting, and tabulating. Any ballots with unmatched signatures, missing signatures or where the voter's intent is not clear, are presented to the County Canvassing Board.

Canvass.

Final determination of questionable ballots by the County Canvassing Board.

During this time, the election workers also investigate provisional ballots. They determine if the voter is registered or not. If the voter is registered, they determine which candidates/issues for which the voter is eligible to vote. If the voter is not registered, they make sure the voter was not cancelled by mistake. If the voter was not cancelled by mistake, the County Canvassing Board does not count that ballot. All provisional ballots are presented to the board for canvassing to determine if the ballots are to be counted or not. Only the County Canvassing Board has the authority to reject ballots and they may do that individually or by groups of ballots.

Ballots Counted at the Poll Site

In counties tabulating votes at the poll site, the precinct election officers print two copies of the results from each tabulating machine. One is returned with the microchip to the elections department and one is posted at the poll site. The precinct election officers compare the results with the number of people who signed the poll book. The results are then transmitted to the county elections department either by telephone modem or by the precinct election officers delivering the microchip from the tabulating system to the counting center. If the latter is the case, the chip does not need to be accompanied by two people.

Accessible Voting Unit (AVU).
A touch screen or other device which allows disabled voters to vote without assistance. Also known as Direct Recording Equipment (DRE).

UOCAVA.
Acronym for the Federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

Election Certification

The official final results of an election is the total of all valid ballots cast at the polls, by mail, on accessible voting units (AVUs), or direct recording equipment (DRE). Counties must certify the General Election 21 days after Election Day, and all other elections 15 days after Election Day.

An election is certified during a public meeting of the County Canvassing Board. At that time, the chair of the County Commission or County Council administers an oath to the County Auditor (in King County it is the Elections Division Director) attesting to the accuracy of the results. The County Auditor presents a final copy of the results, the oath, and the reconciliation report to the Canvassing Board.

The reconciliation report must demonstrate that the number of ballots received equals the number of ballots counted plus the number rejected. If the numbers do not match, then the report shall include the detailed steps taken to balance the numbers. The following information must be included in the reconciliation report:

- Number of registered voters;
- Ballots counted;
- Provisional ballots issued, counted and rejected;
- Absentee ballots issued, counted and rejected;
- Federal write-in ballots counted and;
- UOCAVA ballots issued, counted and rejected.

If the County Canvassing Board is satisfied with the results, the board signs the certification. A copy of the certification must be electronically transmitted immediately after certification to the Office of the Secretary of State for Primary and General Elections. A hard copy of the certification must be mailed to the Office of the Secretary of State no later than the next business day.

If there are discrepancies with the results and/or the reconciliation report, the County Canvassing Board may re-canvass the ballots. The re-canvass must be completed on or before the last day to certify the election.

Recount.

The process for retabulating the votes for a specific office or issue on all valid ballots cast in a primary or election.

Recounts

A recount may be conducted to verify the number of votes counted for a particular office or measure. It may be either mandatory or requested.

Observers should be allowed to observe all parts of the recount.

All questions of voter registration, voter qualification, and voter intent previously considered will not be reconsidered during a recount of the original ballots.

When a county is recounting only part of the county, they may need to sort the ballots for the districts being recounted. This may take place prior to the day set to begin the actual recount. Contact your County Auditor to observe this process.

Mandatory Recounts

A mandatory recount is required when the difference in the results between two candidates or the two choices in a statewide initiative or referendum is within the margin set by state law:

For statewide offices and statewide measures, when the difference is less than 2,000 votes and less than one half of one percent, then the race will be recounted using vote tallying systems. When the difference is less than 1,000 votes and less than one fourth of one percent, the race will be recounted by hand.

For all other offices, when the difference is less than 2,000 votes and less than one half of one percent, then the race will be recounted using vote tallying systems. When the difference is less than 150 votes and less than one fourth of one percent, the race will be counted by hand.

Measures, other than statewide initiatives and referendums, do not qualify for mandatory recounts under state law. They may be recounted, however, as a requested recount.

The County Canvassing Board determines when the recount is to be held. When the office is statewide or is in a judicial, congressional, or legislative district that crosses county lines, the Secretary of State determines when the recount is to be certified.

Before, during, and after the recount, security of the ballots should be maintained. The ballots should be stored in sealed containers whenever ballots are not being processed. The ballots should be secured each night any time a recount takes more than one day to complete.

Direct Recording Equipment (DRE). Also known as AVU.

A voting unit that records a vote electronically. All direct recording electronic voting devices produce a paper record.

Machine Recounts

A machine recount requires running the ballots through the ballot counter a second time. In the case of a digital scan system, the ballot images are reloaded into the ballot tabulation software as they were originally canvassed. In the case of Direct Recording Equipment (DRE) voting devices, the results of the DRE must be reloaded into the vote tallying system.

All voting systems will require the re-examination of undervotes in the race being recounted. Re-examination of undervotes will detect any valid votes previously not tabulated.

Once all the results have been recalculated, the county canvassing board will certify the results and amend the official abstract of the election with the new totals. If the Secretary of State called for the recount, a copy of the amended results should be sent to the Office of the Secretary of State.

Manual Recounts

During a manual recount, the results are counted by teams of at least two people, who count the votes by hand. Counting boards must be comprised of either one representative from each of the two major political parties, or two election staff persons. Additional persons may be added.

The procedure for conducting a manual recount is as follows.

- Only the responses for one race or measure will be counted at any time.
- One precinct or batch is delivered to a recount team. The original results are not provided.
- The ballots are sorted into separate stacks for each of the candidates or side of a ballot measure, overvotes, undervotes, and write-in votes.
- Each stack of ballots must be counted at least twice to confirm the number of votes in each stack. The individual tallies are not shared until both persons have counted the ballots.
- Individual tallies for each stack are compared. If the counts match, the results are reported to the designated staff person. The counts are then compared to the original results.
- If the counts do not match, the ballots are recounted by the same counting board one more time. If the counts still do not match, the discrepancy must be reported to the designated staff person and the ballots referred to another counting board.
- Any ballots that have votes that are not clearly marked should be referred to the County Canvassing Board for determination.
- The County Canvassing Board determines which votes should be counted

if ballots are referred by the recount teams. Any valid votes found on these ballots are added to the results. The board may also investigate any discrepancies between the hand recount and the original count.

- When all the ballots have been tallied by the individual recount teams, the results from each team are added together with the valid votes from the County Canvassing Board. This is the new total for the race.
- Once the new total has been verified, the County Canvassing Board certifies the new totals and amends the abstract of votes.

Requested Recounts

A recount may be requested by an officer of a political party, a candidate of the office, or a group of five or more registered voters for any question or issue.

The request for a recount must be done in writing and filed with the appropriate filing officer within three business days after the certification of an election by a County Canvassing Board or the Secretary of State. The request must state whether the recount will be done by hand or by the vote tally system and whether all ballots or selected precincts are to be recounted.

A deposit is required at the time of the request of 15 cents per ballot to be recounted by vote tally system or 25 cents per ballot for a hand recount. Each county canvassing board will determine the actual cost of the recount. The requester must pay the actual cost of the recount unless the recount changes the results of the election. In that case, the deposit is refunded.

A requested recount is conducted in the same manner as a mandatory recount.

Elections Ending in a Tie

Whenever there is a tie between candidates, a mandatory recount will be conducted. If the race is still tied after the recount, the winner is decided by lot by the appropriate filing officer. "By lot" may be a flipping of a coin, drawing a number, or something similar.



Glossary

Accessible Voting Unit (AVU). A touch screen or other device which allows disabled voters to vote without assistance. Also known as “DRE” , Direct Recording Equipment.

Ballot Duplication. The process of making an exact copy of a ballot to make sure it will be counted correctly by the ballot counting system.

Ballot Counter. A machine that tabulates votes in a readable format. Also known as a vote tallying system or ballot tabulator.

Ballot Inspection. Each ballot must be inspected for mistakes or damage that would prevent the votes to be counted correctly.

Ballot Resolution. In a county using a digital scan system, resolving ballots is the equivalent of duplicating ballots. Resolving a digitally scanned copy of a ballot is done to permit a vote to be counted as the voter intended.

Board Workers. The people who run elections at each poll site. Also known as “poll workers” or “precinct election officers”.

Canvass. Final determination of questionable ballots by the County Canvassing Board.

Counting Center. The location in a county where ballots are processed and counted. In the case of counties that have ballot counters at the poll site, it is where the results from the poll site are combined into one set of election results.

County Canvassing Board. Consisting of the County Auditor (in King County it is the Elections Division Director), County Prosecuting Attorney, and the chairman of the County Commissioners or County Council.

Direct Recording Equipment (DRE). A voting unit that records a vote electronically. All direct recording electronic voting devices produce a paper record.

Election Observer. Official observer appointed by one of the major political parties. An official observer may not be an election worker hired

to process ballots and may not serve as a poll watcher at the same time.

Logic and Accuracy. An official test to verify that the ballot counter and programming correctly counts each style of ballot and produces cumulative totals.

Major Political Party. A political party is designated as a major party if one of its nominees received more than 5 percent of the total votes cast for President, United States Senator, or a statewide office in a general election in an even numbered year.

Overvote. More than the allowable number of votes cast for any one race or measure by a voter on a ballot.

Poll Watcher. An individual associated with a political party, candidate, or organization to observe and record the activities at a poll site.

Poll Worker. The people who administer elections at each poll site. Also known as “precinct election officers” or “board workers”.

Precinct Election Officers. The people who help administer elections at each poll site. Also known as “poll workers” or “board workers”.

Provisional Ballots. A ballot issued when the voter’s name is not on the voter list, was sent an absentee or mail ballot, did not have identification at the poll site, or any other reason when a voter can not vote a regular ballot.

Recount. The process for retabulating the votes for a specific office or issue on all valid ballots cast in a primary or election.

Secure Storage. Employs the use of numbered seals and logs or any other security measures which will detect inappropriate access to secured materials.

Tabulate. To total votes in a readable format.

Undervote. A race or measure with no vote cast by a voter on a valid ballot. Also known as a “blank” vote.